

MINUTES  
San Bernardino County  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION PUBLIC SESSION  
March 4, 2010; 12:00-2:00 pm  
BHRC, 850 E. Foothill Blvd. - Auditorium  
Rialto, CA 92376

**Commissioners Present:**

May Farr, Gabriel Gonzales, Susan McGee-Stehsel, Michael Hill, Jane Mercer, Bill Swift, Christopher Massa, Veatrice Jews, Monica Alonso, Roberto Casas and Talli Simmons on behalf of Supervisor Neil Derry.

**Excused Absence:**

Jane Godager, Tanya Perry, David Ford and Tom Rivera

**Guests:**

Allan Rawland, Director; Debi Pasco, Clerk of the Mental Health Commission; Linda Hart, African American Mental Health Coalition, Wayne Henkelmann, San Bernardino Superior Courts, Joe Guzman, Kelli Coayton, Mental Health Services Success First, EMQ Families First; Gil Navarro, Education Advocate; Monica Wilson, African American Mental Health Coalition; Clodeveo Gosuico, Orchid Court; Veronica Kelley, Michele DeCourten, Paula Roby, Michael Day, Kim Rosa, Michael Knight, Isaac Jackson, Manpreet Rai, André Bossieux, Megan Johnson, Stephanie Paredez, Cynthia White, Mark Thomas, Bob Sudol, Michael Oliver, Doris Turner, Ana Astrande, Brandon Hammerschlag, Yvonne Love, Lauretta Ross, Barbara Ferri, Mariann Ruffolo, Michael Schertell, David Denkers, Marilyn Ashton, Jon Buffong, Dennis Terrones, Barbara Egan, Maria Coronado, Benita Ramsey, CaSonya Thomas, Paula Rutten, Lynn Van Gilder, Linda Charkins, Andy Gruchy, Richard Louis, Lisa K. McGinnis, Juana Orellana, and Xochilt Flores, DBH.

**CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS AND MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING**

In the absence of Chairperson David Ford, Vice Chairperson Susan McGee-Stehsel called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

Debi Pasco, Clerk of the Commission, announced that Commissioner Michael Hill, Second District, was reappointed for another 3-year term to the Mental Health Commission by Supervisor Paul Biane at the February 9, 2010 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Today's Public Session agenda was approved and the minutes from the February 4th Mental Health Commission Public Session were approved as written.

**MHSA RECOGNITION**

Mariann Ruffolo, MHSA Coordinator, and Director Rawland presented Michele DeCourten and Paula Roby with recognition plaques for their tireless contributions in obtaining a total of \$260 million in funding for all components of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). When Paula and Michele came out of retirement back in 2005, San Bernardino County (SBC) was behind in the MHSA planning process; five years later SBC is way out in front. Paula and Michele contributed SBC's MHSA success to the leadership of the Mental Health Commission and Director Rawland.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCY AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

Veronica Kelley, DBH Cultural Competency Officer, presented the March 2010 Cultural Competency Award of Excellence to Maria Franco, Promotora de Salud, El Sol Neighborhood Education Center. Maria advocates for better health, both mental and physical, in her community.

***Nomination:*** "Maria Franco is a woman 100% committed to helping her community and all those in need of behavioral health services in San Bernardino County. Maria volunteers as a speaker often, and even in challenging situations, such as presenting to mental health directors, the State,

*or the community at large she demonstrates grace and dedication. She is a great role model for us all.*

Congratulations Maria!

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gil Navarro, behavioral health client education advocate, works with the public school system handling expulsions and IEPs. He is here today to commend two DBH staff, Mike Schertell, Acting Deputy Director, Children's Services, and Veronica Kelley, Cultural Competency Officer. When Gil contacts these individuals they work out clientele issues and provide effective damage control. Gil, and the families he assists, appreciate the quality of service!

Sheila Futch, Field Representative for Wilmer Amina Carter, Assembly Member, 62<sup>nd</sup> District, congratulated Linda Hart and Monica Wilson for working with Assembly Member Carter's office to establish a state resolution to designate the second week in February as African American Mental Health week to raise awareness and decrease the stigma surrounding mental health in the African American community.

Director Rawland stated that the County of San Bernardino Board of Supervisors also adopted this same resolution at their March 2, 2010 meeting. Michael Townsend, Field Representative for Supervisor Josie Gonzales, surprised the African American Mental Health Coalition by presenting them the resolution at their March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Linda Hart stated that these resolutions came about due to areas of concern regarding mental health coming from the African American community that needed to be addressed. We have seen changes and look forward to the future.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

#### **First District:**

Commissioner Bill Swift is pleased to see that Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) will be presented at today's meeting. Things are looking very positive as DBH continues to provide this training to law enforcement in the High Desert.

#### **Second District:**

Commissioner Monica Alonso is continuing her recovery at Upland Community Counseling and the clubhouse. She is becoming more involved in the District Advisory Committees.

Commissioner May Farr stated that the next Second and Fourth District Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting is scheduled for March 25 at Lion's Club West. Clinics are supportive of the DAC and attendance is increasing. She also attended the Mental Health Policy Forum in Riverside in February where speakers discussed the future of mental health. Ms. Farr is involved with the Coalition against Sexual Exploitation (CASE) to help bring awareness of this growing problem. She announced DBH in collaboration with other city/county agencies will be hosting a Mental Health Law Enforcement Conference in the fall of 2010. She would like to thank everyone for their participation in the November 2009 NAMI Walk and raising \$62,000. Director Rawland's and Director Jerry Wengerd of Riverside County Mental Health have an ongoing contest for which director's team can raise the most money for NAMI. Director Jerry Wengerd's team raised \$50 more than Director Allan Rawland's team.

#### **Third District:**

Commissioner Chris Massa stated that TEAM House is planning many upcoming activities.

#### **Fourth District:**

Commissioner Jane Mercer continues to work with homeless in Ontario. 70% of the homeless are mentally ill and she assists in obtaining services for these individuals by working collaboratively with the Holt Clinic.

Commissioner Roberto Casas welcomed Gil Navarro to the meeting. Dr. Casas has been working on community block grants to enhance behavioral health services in the Fourth District.

### **Fifth District:**

Commissioner Veatrice Jews continues to work with the African American Mental Health Coalition which meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month.

Commissioner Susan McGee-Stehsel attended the Perinatal Mood Disorder conference hosted by DBH on March 2, 2010. Statistics show that 15% of pregnant women display mood disorders; that number is 35% in the Coachella Valley. It is important that this information is shared as there are overlapping issues; mental health professionals do not want to treat pregnant women and obstetricians do not want to treat patients that present with mental health issues.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Rawland announced that during the Mental Health Commission Executive Session it was determined that a District Advisory Committee technical assistance conference be held in August 2010 to organize and develop a community stakeholder network, similar to Los Angeles County. Allan will have staff prepare a plan.

Director Rawland complimented the Board of Supervisors for their selection of Gregory C. Devereaux as the new County Administrative Officer effective February 13, 2010.

Due to the recent tragedy in Upland, the Conditional Release Program (CONREP) has undergone a complete analysis and modifications. Senator Dutton, working with State Hospitals, the District Attorney and Public Defender's Office, will be taking legislation to the State to change existing CONREP guidelines.

The CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation will be releasing prisoners back into communities. DBH is working to address the additional need of services for this population.

When Director Rawland arrived at BHRC this morning, he noticed Commissioner McGee-Stehsel working with a client in the Crisis Walk in Center prior to chairing the Executive Session. He acknowledged each and every Commissioner for their dedication and commitment to improving the lives of the people we serve.

### **FY 2009-2010 State and County Budget**

Director Rawland will have more budget details in April. The Governor's proposal to shift \$452 million of MHSA funds to the State General Fund for EPSDT Children Services and Managed Care. This proposal will need voter approval in June.

Alcohol and Drug Services is suffering \$18 million in cuts. We anticipate receiving \$2 million federal grant through March 2011 from the CA Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA): Recovery Act Justice Assistance Grant – Substance Abuse Offender Treatment Program (JAG-OTP)

Sales tax and vehicle license fees (Realignment) will be reduced to \$48 million for FY 10-11 and to \$45 million for FY 11-12. DBH cost containment strategies are working; however there will be more to address. Paula Rutten, DBH Program Manager II of the ARMC inpatient Diversion Team, has been successful in reducing costs by keeping clients out of the hospital by providing treatment through alternate resources. We are now able to provide services in our own communities instead of transferring outside the county.

### **Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Update**

The County of San Bernardino Innovation Plan submitted to the State has been approved. Director Rawland acknowledged Michael Knight, Program Manager I, for seeing the Plan through. As with many of our MHSA Components, San Bernardino County's Innovation Plan will be used as a model by other counties.

2010 is the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mental Health Services Act. CaSonya Thomas, Mariann Ruffolo and Lynn Neuenswander are working on a report outlining the services provided to 72,000 clients due to the infusion of Prop 63 funding into the County of San Bernardino behavioral health system over the last 5 years.

### **Room and Board Housing: Empowering Behavioral Health Consumers**

Kim Rosa, Chief Patients' Rights Advocate provided an overview of Room and Board Housing:

- In 2006, DBH Director was given authority by the Board of Supervisors to execute standard agreement with vendor pool members that successfully responded to the RFQ process. A DBH vendor pool list was established as a resource to provide emergency lodging and food to the mentally ill adult homeless, Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and forensic clients.
- DBH conducts regular site visits, evaluations and imposes sanctions if vendor is found to be non-compliant.
- In 2009 DBH implemented new requirements: requires city business license; immediate removal from list if any issue is reported to Patients' Rights. Client education and peer-driven regional coalitions were established.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION: POLICE ACTIVITIES LEAGUE**

Commissioner Bill Swift introduced Sergeant Derek Pacifico and Deputy Gilmore, from the Apple Valley Police Activities League (PALS). PALS originated in Chicago 65 years ago to unite communities and law enforcement by providing youth programs which develop discipline, positive self-image, mutual trust and respect. PALS are non profit organizations located nationwide, with only one pilot program in San Bernardino County.

Director Rawland asked Gary Atkins, David Denkers and André Bossieux to work with Sergeant Pacifico to perhaps develop a partnership with county agencies and coordinate with Michael Knight and Mariann Ruffolo for an opportunity to expand MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funds.

Commissioner McGee-Stehsel stated that Cal State University is using students as mentors and trainers for other youth.

Commissioner Roberto Casas will suggest this item be added to the county school agenda for the Gang and Drug Committee.

### **OUTSIDE AGENCY REPORTS**

Lynn Neuenswander announced that there will be an At Your Service Community Resource Fair held at Victoria Gardens from 9am-5pm in Rancho Cucamonga to raise awareness of services provided by the County of San Bernardino. DBH will be represented with event activities and cultural entertainment.

DBH has partnered with Veterans' Affairs to display the Suitcases in the Attic exhibit for the first 2 weeks in May at the Government Center; then the display will move to the San Bernardino County Museum for the remainder of the month.

May 19, 2010 – Evening with the Stars from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Ontario Doubletree Hotel. Christopher Kennedy Lawford will be the keynote speaker.

May Farr encouraged everyone to clean closets for the Clothing Drive the first week in May. Goodwill Industries will provide \$10 clothing vouchers for every two bags donated. These vouchers will be distributed to consumers.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further items to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

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David Ford  
Chairperson

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Debi Pasco  
Clerk of the Mental Health Commission